



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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JULY 28, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*A copy of today's plea agreement is available in .pdf format
and may be downloaded from the district's Web site at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow*

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE PLEADS GUILTY TO COMPUTER HACKING TO PROMOTE PROSTITUTION

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a federal employee in Kansas City, Mo., pleaded guilty in federal court today to illegally using her computer access at the Department of Health and Human Services to promote her own unlawful prostitution business.

Candice G. Smith, 44, of Blue Springs, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. Chief Magistrate Judge John T. Maughmer this afternoon to charges contained in a March 4, 2005, federal indictment.

By pleading guilty today, **Smith** admitted that she made unauthorized and illegal inquiries into the LexisNexis database that is available to her as a payment recovery specialist for the Center for Medicaid Services (an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services). LexisNexis is a data collection company that provides a database containing non-public information that may only be used for approved purposes, such as credit history and driver's license information, to certain private and government agencies. For example, it is permissible for a government agency to query LexisNexis for law enforcement purposes. LexisNexis may not, however, be queried by an individual to promote personal financial gain.

Smith, who has been working as a prostitute, made LexisNexis inquiries for personal reasons even though she knew that it was prohibited to do so, and she used the information to aid her in avoiding arrest and prosecution for her prostitution activities. **Smith** queried LexisNexis on numerous occasions, without the authority to do so and for her own purpose.

Under federal statutes, **Smith** could be subject to a sentence of up to five years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeff Valenti. It was investigated by the Department of Health and Human Service - Office of Inspector General, the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Federal Protective Service.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow